

SWABCHA Fact Sheet: Male & Female Condoms

Text sourced from the SWABCHA Change Agent Training Guide - 2012

Correct and Consistent Condom Use

Condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are the only form of protection that can help stop the transmission of sexually transmitted Infections (STIs) such as HIV, and prevent pregnancy.



A female condom (left) and a male condom (right)

There are two main types of condom. What is generally called a condom is the 'male' condom, a sheath or covering which fits over a man's penis, and which is closed at one end. There is also a female condom, or vaginal sheath, which is used by a woman and fits inside the vagina.

Condoms are usually made of latex or polyurethane. Latex condoms can only be used with water based lubricants, not oil based lubricants such as Vaseline or cold cream as they break down the latex.

Polyurethane condoms are made from a type of plastic. They are suitable for the small number of people who are allergic to latex. Polyurethane condoms are thinner than latex condoms, and so can increase sensitivity. However, they are more expensive than latex condoms and slightly less flexible so more lubrication may be needed. Both oil and water based lubricants can be used with them. With both types the likelihood of breakages is very small if used correctly.

Condoms come in a variety of shapes and colours. Most have a reservoir tip although some have a plain tip. Condoms may be regular shaped (with straight sides), form fit (indented below the head of the penis), or they may be flared (wider over the head of the penis). Ribbed condoms are textured with ribs or bumps, which can increase sensation for both partners.

It's up to you which shape you choose. All of the differences in shape are designed to suit different personal preferences and enhance pleasure. It is important to communicate with your partner to be sure that you are using condoms that satisfy both of you.



Condoms come in a variety of shapes and sizes

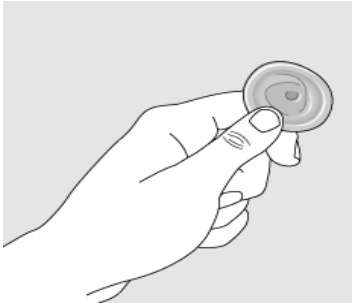
You need to use a new condom every time you have sexual intercourse. Never use the same condom twice.

Correct use of a male condom

Only put on a condom once there is a partial or full erection.

- Store in a cool, dry place, preferably near the bed but away from the sun.
- Check the expiry date and that it has air inside.
- Squeeze the condom to one side on the jugged side.
- Open the condom packet at one corner being careful not to tear the condom with your fingernails, your teeth, or through being too rough. Make sure the packet and condom appear to be in good condition, and check that the expiry date has not passed.
- Place the rolled condom over the tip of the hard penis, whilst holding the tip of the condom enough to leave space for semen to collect. If the penis is not circumcised, pull back the foreskin before rolling on the condom.
- Roll the condom all the way down to the base of the penis, and smooth out any air bubbles. (Air bubbles can cause a condom to break.)
- If you need extra lubrication outside the condom, use a water-based lubricant (such as KY Jelly or Liquid Silk)
- When you have ejaculated or finished having sex, withdraw the penis before it softens. Make sure you hold the condom against the base of the penis while you withdraw, so that the semen does not spill.
- Whilst you are having sex, check the condom from time to time to make sure it hasn't split or slipped off. If it slips off, roll it back down immediately. If it comes off you will have to withdraw and put on a new one.
- If a condom breaks during sexual intercourse, pull out quickly and replace the condom. Visit the nearest hospital for STIs and pregnancy prevention within 72 hours.
- All used condoms should be wrapped in tissue or toilet paper and thrown in the bin where children cannot find them. Condoms should not be flushed down the toilet as they may cause blockages in the sewage system.

Demonstrate the procedure below with a plastic penis if possible.



1. Check the condom:

Check the expiry date and that the condom **packet** is not damaged. Carefully tear open the packet without damaging the condom.



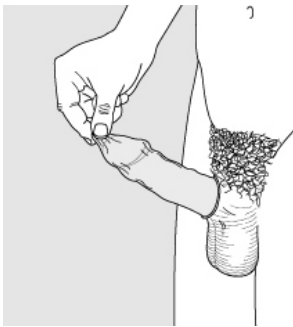
2. Right way around:

Check that the condom is the right way around before allowing it to touch your penis



3. Roll it on

Hold the end of the condom when unrolling it to create a small space for your semen



4. Lubricants

Do not use oil based lubricants (Like petroleum jelly) with latex condoms. Water based lubricants are safe. Remember. No condom no penetrative sex.



5. Withdrawing

When withdrawing from your partner, hold the condom around the base of your penis to stop it coming off or leaking.



6. Condom Disposal

Wrap the used condom toilet paper. Dispose of it in a dustbin where children cannot get hold of it. Use a new condom every time you have sex

The Female Condom



- Store in a cool dry place and Check the expiry date
- Open the package carefully
- Bend the smaller ring on the closed end of the condom
- Hold the sheath with the open end hanging down
- Squeeze the inner ring and twist to form a figure eight and insert in the vagina
- Use your index finger to push the ring inside the vagina
- The outer ring should lie flat against the opening to your vagina
- After sex remove the condom by twisting the outer ring and pulling it out
- Wrap condom in tissue paper and throw it into a bin (or bury/burn it if there are no bins around). Do not flush.

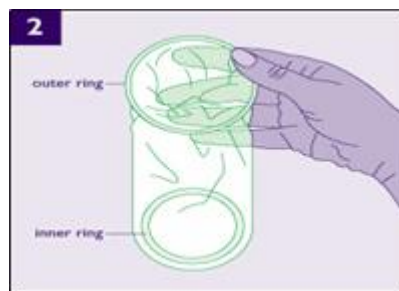
Correct use of female condom

Demonstrate using the vagina model and graphics below.



1. The Outer Ring

Check expiry date on condom packet and make sure that there are no cracks, holes or open sides Tear the package from the arrow on the top right Handle it carefully. Don't tear it with your finger- nails



2. Check the Condom The outer ring covers the area around the opening of the vagina. The inner ring is used for insertion and to help hold the sheath in place during intercourse. Make sure the condom is lubricated on the outside and the inside. You can use both oil based and water based lubricants with female condoms



3. Insert the inner ring

Hold the inner ring between thumb and middle finger, and squeeze it so that it becomes long and narrow.



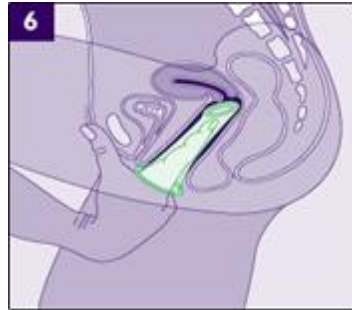
4. Squeeze the inner ring

Choose a position that is comfortable standing with one foot on a chair or squatting or sitting (knees apart) separate or lying down. With the other hand separate the outer lips of the vagina.



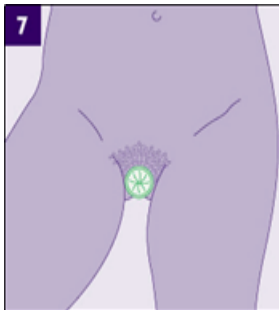
5. Push the condom in full

Gently insert the inner ring into the Vagina. You can insert the female Condom anytime before you have Sex.



6. Push the Condom in

Place the index finger on the inside condom and push the inner ring as far as it will go, don't worry it cannot go too far. Make sure the condom is not twisted. The outer ring should remain outside the vagina



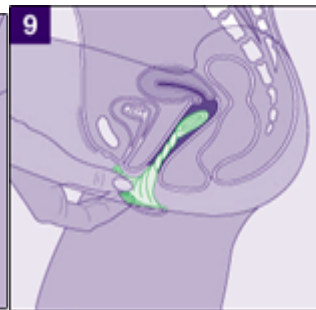
7. In place

The Female Condom is now in place and ready for use with your partner



8. Guide the penis in.

Gently guide the penis into the condom's opening with your hands to make sure that it enters properly



9. Removal

Remove the condom while lying down, before you stand up. Twist the outer ring and then gently pull the condom out.



10. Disposal

Wrap it up and dispose it. Put it in a dust bin where children cannot get hold of it. Do not flush it down the toilet Do not Use it again. Use a new condom every time you have Sex.

The difference between male and female condoms

Male Condom	Female Condom
Rolled on the man's penis	Inserted into the woman's vagina
Male condoms are made of Latex	Female Condom is made of polyurethane/plastic
Lubricant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can include spermicide • Can be water-based only; cannot be oil-based • Located on the outside of condom 	Lubricant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can include spermicide • Can be water-based or oil-based • Located on the inside and outside of condom
Requires erect penis	Does not require erect penis
Condom must be put on an erect penis	Can be inserted prior to sexual intercourse, not dependent on erect penis
Must be removed immediately after ejaculation	Does not need to be removed immediately after ejaculation
Covers most of the penis and protects the woman's internal genitalia.	Covers both the woman's internal and external genitalia and the base of the penis, which provides broader protection.
Latex condoms can decay if not stored properly	Is not susceptible to deterioration from temperature or humidity
Recommended as one time use product.	Recommended as one time use product. Re-use research has been done on the original FC female condom, and WHO issued an Information Update in July 2002 (available at www.who.int/reproductivehealth/rtis/reuse.en.html)

Challenging anti condom responses from partners

<u>Their excuse</u>	<u>Your answer</u>
Don't you trust me?	<i>Trust isn't the point, people can have infections without realizing it</i>
It does not feel as good with a condom	<i>I'll feel more relaxed, If I am more relaxed, I can make it feel better for you.</i>
I don't stay hard when I put on a condom	<i>I'll help you put it on, that will help you keep it hard.</i>
I am afraid to ask him to use a condom. He'll think I don't trust him.	<i>If you can't ask him, you probably don't trust him.</i>
I can't feel a thing when I wear a condom	<i>Maybe that way you'll last even longer and that will make up for it</i>
I don't have a condom with me	<i>I do</i>
It's up to him... it's his decision	<i>It's your health. It should be your decision too!</i>
I'm on the pill, you don't need a condom	<i>I'd like to use it anyway. It will help to protect us from infections we may not realise we have.</i>
It just isn't as sensitive and I can't feel a thing	<i>Maybe that way you will last even longer and that will make up for it</i>
Putting it on interrupts everything	<i>Not if I help put it on</i>
I guess you don't really love me	<i>I do, but I am not risking my future to prove it</i>
I will pull out in time	<i>Women can get pregnant and get STIs from pre-ejaculate</i>
But I love you	<i>Then you'll help us to protect ourselves.</i>
Just this once	<i>Once is all it takes</i>

**Tips that
can help
you to feel
more
confident
and
relaxed
about
using
condoms**

Keep condoms handy at all times. If things start getting steamy - you'll be ready. It's not a good idea to find yourself having to rush out at the crucial moment to buy condoms - at the height of the passion you may not want to.

When you buy condoms, don't get embarrassed. If anything, be proud. It shows that you are responsible and confident and when the time comes it will all be worthwhile.

Talk with your partner about using a condom before having sex. It removes anxiety and embarrassment. Knowing where you both stand before the passion starts will make you a lot more confident that you both agree and are happy about using a condom.

If you are new to condoms, the best way to learn how to use them is to practice putting them on by yourself or your partner. It does not take long to become a master.

If you feel that condoms interrupt your passion then try introducing condoms into your lovemaking. It can be really sexy if your partner helps you put it on or you do it together.
